

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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AMEMBASSY PARIS
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CINCPAC

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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, PK
SUBJECT: BHUTTO TRIAL RESUMES: ROLL ON ACCOUNTABILITY*

REF: ISLAMABAD 0076

1. FORMER PM BHUTTO'S TRIAL ON CHARGES OF CONSPIRACY IN
THE MURDER OF A FORMER POLITICAL OPPONENT'S FATHER RESUMED
BEFORE THE LAHORE HIGH COURT JANUARY 10 AFTER A WINTER RECESS.
THE PARTIES RETURNED IMMEDIATELY TO THEIR LEGAL JOUSING.
BHUTTO, WHO HAS CONSISTENTLY CHALLENGED THE LEGITIMACY AND
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IMPARTIALITY OF THE COURT, OPENED THE PROCEEDINGS WITH THE
ANNOUNCEMENT THAT HE HAD WITHDRAWN THE POWER OF ATTORNEY
FROM HIS FOUR COUNSELS, AND WOULD HENCEFORTH SIT BEFORE
THE COURT UNDEFENDED. THE MOVE, PROBABLY DESIGNED TO
LAY ADDITIONAL GROUNDWORK FOR HIS POLITICAL MARTYRDOM,
WAS COUNTERED BY THE COURT, WHICH APPOINTED ONE OF BHUTTO'S
JUST-WITHDRAWN LAWYERS AS HIS NEW COUNSEL AT THE STATE'S

EXPENSE.

2. IN COURT TESTIMONY JANUARY 10, GHULAM HUSSAIN, FORMER INSPECTOR GENERAL OF THE FEDERAL SECURITY FORCE (FSF), AND NOW A STATE'S WITNESS IN THE CASE, CONTINUED TO SPIN OUT HIS ARCANE TALE OF ARMS, AMMUNITION, AND ULTIMATE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE MURDER, A STORY THAT WILL CONTINUE.

3. IN OTHER ACTIONS ALONG THE "ACCOUNTABILITY" TRAIL, THE URDU PRESS REPORTED JANUARY 9 THAT CHIEF MARTIAL LAW ADMINISTRATOR ZIA'S COMMITTEE ON ELECTION DISQUALIFICATIONS (REFTEL) HAS IDENTIFIED 275 FORMER PPP MINISTERS AND MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT WHO COULD BE BANNED FROM CONTESTING FUTURE POLLS. NO PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENTS HAVE BEEN MADE BY THE MLA ON THE SUBJECT. THE URDU PRESS ALSO REPORTED THAT APPROXIMATELY 750 CASES AGAINST BHUTTO AND HIS COLLEAGUES, PRESUMABLY OF CORRUPTION OR MALFEASANCE, ARE READY TO BE PRESENTED, AND THAT 10 SPECIAL COURTS WILL BE ESTABLISHED BY THE MARTIAL LAW ADMINISTRATION TO HEAR THE TRIALS. HUMMEL

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